

# TOC H JOURNAL



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THREEPENCE

## Toc H for New Friends

### What it is

Toc H is out to win men's friendship and their service for the benefit of others. It stands always, but especially now, when values which seemed permanent are being discarded, for truth and understanding, for unselfishness and fair dealing, for individual freedom based on a practical Christian outlook on life. Toc H works under a Royal Charter granted by H.M. King George V in 1922.

### How it started

It began with Talbot House (Toc H is the signaller's way of saying T.H.) opened in 1915 in the Belgian town of Poperinghe, the nearest habitable point in the Ypres Salient. It was intended to be a sort of soldiers' rest house where men back from the line could find refreshment for body, mind and spirit. Owing largely to the Rev. P. B. Clayton, an Army Chaplain in charge, it soon secured a reputation in the British Expeditionary Force as a place of friendship and cheerfulness. It welcomed men not merely to a meal and writing material but to the small homely things that mean so much. Many who used it found their way to the Chapel in the loft and gained fresh strength to realise that "behind the ebb and flow of things temporal stand the Eternal Realities".

### 1919 to 1939

"Tubby" Clayton and a few survivors saw the need to recapture in peace-time the spirit of comradeship in common service and sacrifice which they had learnt in war and to pass it on to a new generation. The idea spread. By 1939 Toc H was established in over 1,000 places in the United Kingdom and had forged a chain linking 500 more throughout the Empire and beyond. The Old House at Poperinghe and its Upper Room, given back to Toc H, has been visited by many thousands, who have gained, as those before them, fresh strength to play their part steadfastly and cheerfully. More than 20 hostels (called Marks) have been opened and are available for those who get the chance to use them.

### What it means in practice

In his efforts to further the objects for which Toc H exists, each member has what is called the Toc H Compass to guide him. Its Four Points may thus be summarised:

*To Think Fairly.* To win a chivalry of mind, whereby he will not be overready to condemn honest difference, but will be humbleminded in his judgment of great issues, avoiding prejudice and striving for truth.

*To Love Widely.* To learn the habit of trying day by day to understand and to help all sorts and conditions of men.

*To Witness Humbly.* Toc H is rooted in the supreme conviction that the great thing is to spread the weekday Christian Gospel. Every member is pledged to do his blundering bit by carrying the contagion quietly. The point here is that lives speak while words are merely spoken.

*To Build Bravely.* (a) To be resolute in building his own life, without forgetting that what matters most is not what he can do for himself but what he can do for others. (b) To see in Toc H a bridge between himself and the lives of others, and to build it bravely, regarding his share in doing so as a sacred trust.

### Membership

Toc H wants men who are willing to put service before self, are trying to think fairly and are willing to offer friendship. You probably won't be asked to join, but if you feel you want to share in this great adventure, let us know. It will cost you no more than you can afford. If you would like to know more about it, ask any member you know or write to Toc H Headquarters, 47, Francis Street, London, S.W.1.

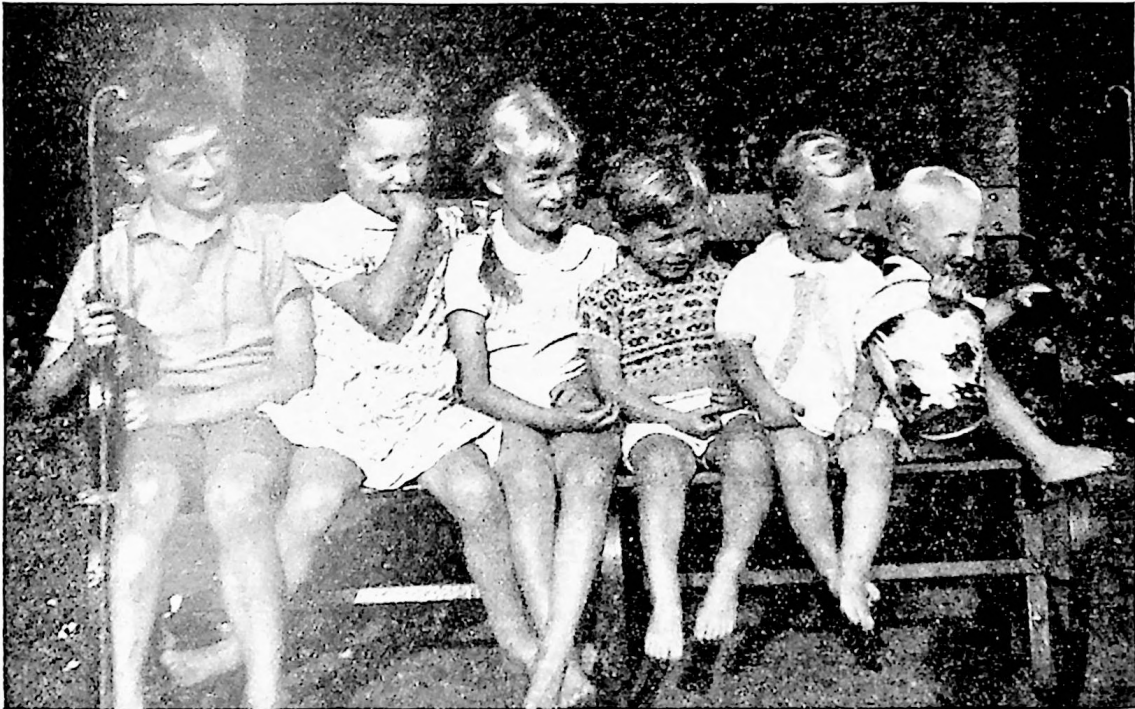
# TOC H JOURNAL

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## AN AFFAIR OF THE HEART



HITLER, the other day, in an expansive moment (he was speaking to his cronies in a famous beer-cellar) remarked that Spring was coming and that he felt young. This, in the circumstances, passed for humour and was malicious enough to call for rapturous applause. It seems scarcely fair or decent to mention it immediately below a picture of youth in which the humour rings gloriously true and there is not a ghost of maliciousness. For these are not only the children, but the grandchildren of Toc H members, the third generation in a family which ought to possess the secret of perpetual youth. Toc H is untrue to itself if it ever grows old, for youth is an affair not of years but of the heart.

And yet, of recent years, I began to notice and to fear that Toc H was growing middle-aged. I mean a little stiff in the joints of its mind, a little too staid in its gait, a little fussy and fretful about details, a little resentful of ardent and revolutionary youngsters in its ranks, rather too settled in its habits and 'set' in its programme. I know that I am not alone in feeling this; many members have noticed it, and none of us knew quite what to do about it. Then the war came and, before we had time to do anything ourselves, took the matter in hand. It grasped our world by the scruff of the neck and shook it violently. You and I could not 'stay put,' just where we were. We had to be suddenly old and fall

out, or we had to be young enough to fall in. Here and there, in very few cases indeed, Toc H members wondered and hesitated. The main body did not stop to think and choose; it fell in, Service and civilian alike in their different spheres, among the ranks of marching men. Toc H stepped forward from middle-age into youth. When in after years we are able to look back on this present time, I should not be surprised if we say that in this war, as truly as after the last, Toc H has been reborn.

What happens to a movement depends, I suppose, on what happens to the men who compose it. I can only speak for myself—as you must speak for yourself. For some years now the calendar has told me that I am well advanced into middle-age; I began to wonder how soon it would be decorous to succumb to its pleasures; sometimes I caught myself feeling like it. I never expect to be as old again as I was at eighteen, when the whole world seemed waiting for me to put it right. But middle-age spreads a more subtle net for the feet and I might have got entangled in it. I kept on walking, for I believe wholeheartedly in the wise saying that there are only three kinds of walkers—young walkers, less young walkers, and walkers in an advanced stage of youth, in which third class I hope always to belong. But, walking with those half my age, I am apt to be last up the mountain now: can this be middle age? Then the war came, and I haven't had time since to do much about mountains. I shall be last up, I dare say, when the time comes again—but when I have got my breath on top, I shall be as young as the others there, I think.

When the war came I saw my own mother, her 80th birthday past, take her stand with characteristic simplicity and decision on the side of youth, with a fortitude in a dangerous place which belongs to experience, but also with a shining 'joyalty of mind' which belongs only to the young in spirit. That example should have sufficed for me, if example had been needed. But outside stimulus was not needed—not even the coming of Spring nor the encouragement of a beer-cellar. The sudden descent of war did the trick. Old habits were interrupted, old

landmarks submerged, old possessions, dear to middle age, snatched away. Bigger issues than today's comforts and tomorrow's rewards filled all our minds. We had no time for growing old, unless we elected to retire to some remote corner to avoid, if possible, the harsh impact of the struggle. The world was plunged into darkness and danger and tragedy. It was filled also with sudden adventure, not all reserved for the young in years.

Fresh adventure challenges Toc H in the present and in the coming time. It calls for a Toc H grown younger to face it. And I, for one, believe that Toc H is growing young enough for the task. The seniors, tried and tired as they must often be nowadays, have become brisker and more elastic. The juniors, up to the neck in prospects of bright danger, are being reinforced by many other juniors, men serving beside them in war, who are being caught, almost unbeknownst (as men have so often been caught before), for service in Toc H when peace comes again. And behind them, as yet all unaware, will come the lovely children in the picture, a generation fit to take over from the juniors when they slip into middle-age. The story of Toc H must always be the story of renewal.

It is hard to foresee how the present war-time chapter of our story will round itself off, still harder to guess what the one after will look like. Our small movement will not lose its essential spirit: if it loses that, it loses all and had better be decently buried. But it will change its old face, I fancy, in many ways. Perhaps it will find new colour and variety, a fresh sense of fun. I suspect that, while based deeply on its old traditions, it will talk less of the past and feel itself less bound by precedent. Branches which have lain long at anchor, in harbours grown too familiar, will put out to sea again. They will bring back material for the making of new traditions, as their Elder Brethren did a quarter of a century ago. And, looking back in middle age on this time of stress and new beginning may they be able, as Wordsworth did, to say:—

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
But to be young was very heaven.

BARCLAY BARON.



## TRAVELLERS' JOY

*In a letter of March 18, to Petty Officer E. Wallace, H.M.S. Excellent, TUBBY wrote:—*

I WAS annoyed at first to meet some critics outside Toc H who calmly talked as if Toc H had served its time and generation and must now pass away contentedly. Annoyance came at first, amusement later; and when I learned the depth of determination in many little Groups which I have seen during the last five weeks, there is no sign whatever of decay. However much they feel themselves cut off, much of their work goes forward quietly and in good heart among the older men. Very few younger men are now at home. One defect in many of these units was inability to get in touch with men upon the threshold of Toc H, who could not even find out where they met. While in peace time there is a natural reluctance to print long lists of names and addresses of local units, since these lists may fall into wrong hands and prove an invitation accepted only by the men who cadge, it is, I think, essential, as things stand, that mobile members and probationers should now receive printed address lists covering their likely spheres of duty. I could give some poignant illustrations of this need; one of a man from South America, one of the finest I have come across, who volunteered and made the passage home. He came to Liverpool and found the Mark where he received a memorable welcome. He told me that this meant so much to him that he registered a vow to find Toc H wherever he was stationed. He did not know what labour it would cost. In one big town where Toc H is at work, he spent his month unable to discover a single working member of Toc H, still less its Guest-night or its meeting place. Thus disappointed, he was then transferred and had a like experience elsewhere; until at last he came up to the Highlands and made a final bid to search it out. This was rewarded when he went at night to a Scots Kirk. After the evening service he introduced himself to the Minister, who was himself the Padre of

Toc H. From that stage onwards this fine man from Chile had every reason to rejoice again. The unit welcomed him with open arms, persuaded him to talk on Toc H, Chile, invited him to their respective homes and taught him homely Scotland at its best. They passed him on to Elgin and Nairn, to each of which he made a contribution of a distinctive kind and genuine worth. He is again encouraged in Toc H.

Any wise student of the New Testament must be aware how vitally important is the emphasis laid in the Gospel on the strangers' welcome. It has at some stage been within my mind that Toc H should adopt a further emblem, and that that emblem should be 'Travellers' Joy.' The names for flowers convey much needed lessons. During the spring the hardy London Pride will surely be attempting to appear among the ruins of broken homes. No Toc H unit which permits the stranger to pass it by without an invitation, can truly represent the open door of the Old House.

Therefore I greatly hope that some appropriate list can be devised and made available whereby naval members and friends can discover their brethren on the beach, in every port, from Singapore to Buenos Aires, not only round our coasts. A second list should be available for mobile men, wherever they may be, whose interest in Toc H has been aroused by a chance meeting with a genuine member. I found, to my surprise, it was believed to be a true part of Toc H tradition that units should not advertise their efforts. This is, I think, a misinterpretation; for nothing is more needed now than light, and blacking-out Toc H is a sad process which we need not pursue. We must, of course, observe the defence regulations meticulously, but these do not include a Toc H 'black-out'; so let the little units shine like stars in the deep darkness of this tragic world. TUBBY.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—This is a very real problem, but the solution is not easy. The list of units, printed in close order, now takes 12 pages of the *Annual Report*. If the Secretary's name, unit address and meeting night (if in all cases it could be collected) were added, the list would occupy a respectable book. And even weekly revision would not keep it accurate. What is the answer?

## FACING A NEW WORLD

*The Southern London Area has a 'Thinking Team,' which from time to time issues a duplicated News Letter to units in the Area; these are the product of several minds working together. In sending to the JOURNAL a copy of the following, one of them writes: "After a prolonged parturition our Thinking Team is delivered of this mouse which, though small, is, I hope, not ridiculous." Far from it, let us agree.*

EVENTS move so fast that he who wishes to survive and be of any use must learn to feel strongly and think quickly. The two horses 'Feeling' and 'Thought' should run as a harnessed pair. When Feeling grows bitter and bolts, Thought stumbles—yet bolting Feeling drags Thought violently forward and the applecart may be disastrously upset.

Only very strong feelings will enable us to conquer the evil enthusiasms of the Nazis and other violent idealists. Yet the strength of our feelings alone will not enable us to see straight—rather the reverse, in fact.

### Learning from Others

To get positive conquering ideas we must examine our opponents' case; if there is anything attractive and reasonable in it we have to go one better. Even the lip-service of a liar and the promises of a traitor are a valuable witness to truth. For example, if Hitler says that profit-making moneylenders are the ruin of democracies, our answer should be critically to examine our money-lending ideas. If the Indian Nationalist claims that Imperialism has increased poverty and squalor of the peasantry, we must examine the facts, admit faults where they exist, and advocate better conditions. If we accuse French citizens of being selfishly indifferent to the doings of corrupt politicians, we must examine our own indifference and the occasional ugly glimpses of politics in this country.

If we lament that liberty is slain under dictatorships, we have to show how freedom can be interpreted in our lives in new ways. Many of us have found business life an unorganised scramble, falsely called free enterprise. We hope soon to experience inside the framework of a well-planned society a finer sense of personal freedom, hitherto seldom known on this side of life.

Out of the present contact and conflict between the business man's mind and the official attitude of the services, civil and military, we hope may arise an orderly enthusiasm which will break red tape on one hand and cut out sharp practice on the other.

Most of us consider there is no immediate way out of continuing the destructive work of war; that we must risk smashing many good things in order to break the terrible power of evil. Just as park railings and absurd old guns are being scrapped from our open spaces leaving the ground clear for a more spacious beauty some day, so good and evil traditions are going into the scrap pot together, and we hope to be able to clear some spaces in our minds for the new lay out of life's estate in days to come. Now it is all very well to point the direction, but what prevents us from "going to it"?

### 'God is all right'

We are wakened up by fear, not just for our own skins and for those we love, but for the breakdown of the comforts and security of life as we have known it. This fear makes us get busy on every possible form of quick activity. Action helps us to get used to fear and not be crippled by it. Yet time after time with the active and capable man we find that something snaps and the fears surge in waves over his head. Men try to escape fear by cruelty, by dissipation, by shutting themselves in as recluses, but there is no escape unless they face facts. Violent shocks will not be in vain if they "stab our spirits broad awake." Let us then admit our fears and consider how they may be cured. We cannot stand steady unless we have a solid faith to stand on. So we will start by assuming that, whatever else is wrong, God is all right.

Granted that God is all right we have to

confess that to us His ways seem very round-about and spread over long periods of history before they make sense to our little minds. This being so, our faith will not be affected by the result of the next battle nor the composition of the next Government. The utmost we can expect is to pick out some guiding clues which will tell us whether we are moving broadly in the right direction or not.

It is not enough for decent and kindly individuals to seek to order their private lives in a disordered society. Neither is it enough ruthlessly to make war and damn the consequences. May not God be saying, "For your sins you must clear up your mess and do your own dirty work; only so can you become, through suffering, determined men in place of irresponsible boys"?

### The Leader and the Crowd

Just as adolescence bumps a boy suddenly into a swirling current of emotions and ideals, and it takes him some time to strike out in the deep or to find his feet on the ground, so to-day the society of men in which we live is floundering; the old ideas will not support us in so far as they stand for adventurous self-interest. The solid ground on the other side of the flood is coming in sight.

Life is so complicated on the technical side, that some people must do the organising for the crowd. This may be done by the crowd becoming consenting slaves, which is the easiest way out in the short run. But taking a longer view, where will the future leadership come from if we accept the chance temporary leadership of dictators? Demoralised and despondent men easily respond to false leaders who lay the responsibility for their misfortunes on to other victims.

In so far as leaders come forward whose aim clearly is to play fair with human interests and to leave privileged positions less strongly defended, men will say "please plan out for us something nearer to justice for all,

and we will swallow hardships and temporary inconveniences; get on with the job and we will fall into line."

### Three kinds of Leader

Just a word about the different kinds of leader, so that you may not be discouraged if you do not fit in at first sight.

First, there are the men who are clear-sighted and imaginative. They can bring out of the clouds of confusion pictures that others can see. We call them prophets. Do not think all prophets are intellectual giants; they may be men who see one important fact clearly. You might be one of them.

Second, there are the men with technical ability, and the infinite capacity for taking pains. They will put the means at your disposal to carry out what you decide is worth while. The technician hands power to capitalist and communist alike. He leads because he knows facts about things and processes, but he is a background worker, not a platform man or journalist like the prophet.

Thirdly, there are men who by the sheer vigour of their enthusiasm for life take the lead in every organisation that is going. With them you buckle to and feel every job is a big one.

The moral of this is, don't wait for a miraculous superman, but encourage one another so that there may be a really heavy crop of leaders in infinite variety, and society will throb with their zest. This was the kind of leadership contemplated by the founders of the Christian Church, however imperfectly it has been carried out. Men's powers come to fruition as they recognise that what they attempt is part of God's large scale purpose. We can all be in this. In these days we may not appear to be getting very much out of Life, but we are certainly putting more into it than ever before. And that is what makes Life worth living.

"THINKING TEAM."

### Accountant Wanted

An Assistant Accountant (man or woman, not liable for National Service) is required for the war-time staff of Toc H. Please write to the General Secretary, Toc H, 47, Francis Street, S.W.1, stating age and experience and giving references.

## TOC H AT A WARDENS' POST

*In April last year an article appeared in the JOURNAL describing how a member of Toc H, prevented by National Service from attending his Branch meetings, had made the suggestion to the Wardens' Post to which he was attached that they should work together to build a Team on the Toc H method. The work has now gone full circle, and recently the Branch of Toc H found itself very few in number, owing to the demands of the Services upon its membership, and readily accepted the invitation of the Wardens to meet with them regularly. Here is a description of their first joint Guest-night, written by one who was there.*

THE siren had sounded, the drone of bombers was overhead, and the dull thud of British bombs on the opposite coast every now and again shook the ground. It was a brilliant night of moon and stars. Serenity and sudden death, silence and terrifying noise, paradoxically mingled, told of the birth pangs of something new. My own destination was the Wardens' Post. They were all ready for anything that might happen. But they were clearly getting ready for something else too. It was an interesting group of men—a maimed hero of the last struggle, the secretary of a golf club, a printer, several business men, a bank manager, a corporation official, a couple of parsons, a retired schoolmaster. These men a few nights before had been listening to "Three Men and a Parson." The bank manager was outlining things said in a keen discussion which had followed. They had been in a destructive mood, and the Church, business and politics, Government, local and national, had come in for some severe handling. Two hours of ruthless analysis had left them all rather exhausted. Tonight they had got together again, with some guests asked in for the occasion, determined to find the answer. They all saw quite clearly, that it is one thing to see what is wrong, but quite another to begin to build what is right.

I sat and listened. The schoolmaster said something about democracy and personal responsibility, and it soon began to be a common conviction with all those fellows that the world of tomorrow, whatever form it might take, would be moulded by men like themselves. It is true that it not only "all depends on me," but that "it all begins with me." It was really thrilling to hear those chaps talk. They were determined to "go to it." They threw the ball from one to another, and with-

in an hour I heard them hammering out their thoughts on honesty and freedom, religion and politics, parsons and teachers, -isms and -ologies, the world of yesterday and the world of tomorrow. They were not just talking either. Here was life and direction, a demand for truth, not a competition of viewpoints.

By the time I had to leave they were beginning to get somewhere. As I walked home through the noises of the night I was content. When the last load of bombs has been dropped, what those men had been talking of, their decisions, their discoveries would all be built into the new foundations we are going to lay. What they had been thinking was the real answer to the night bomber—it would make all bombs an anachronism, the savage weapons of a past and dead world. These men had talked honestly about God, and were not embarrassed. They had agreed that God in life would change it, that the root cause of all the trouble, human nature, could be, must be, changed. They had admitted their own failures. They saw the world's misery as the sum total of their, and everybody's, inadequacy. Freedom, they had agreed, was not freedom to do as you like, but freedom to serve, and to do what God wanted. They saw how terrible a master fear had been, how bankrupt life had become because we had trusted the wrong kind of security. There had got to be a change over from gold to God, from selfishness to service. They had come to realise that there was a big price to be paid, pain as well as adventure, wounds as well as effort, for the new day. Here was the moral equivalent for war, here was the new adventure, the price, not of defending and preserving the old, but of building and consolidating the new. Would they face it? I thought they would.

H. W. B.





BETWEEN THE APRIL SHOWERS AT CHURCHILL, OXON.

*Photo: E. S. Tompkins, Stratford-on-Avon.*

## RAGS, BONES AND BOTTLES

WAR, as we all know, produces the strangest paradoxes and the sharpest contradictions. It takes this enormous breach of fellowship among nations to call forth the highest unity, the completest fellowship we have seen within the nation. It seems to need waste on a scale never before equalled—loss of money and men, hourly destruction of precious material and the products of the highest skill, the daily ruin of cities—to make us thrifty in the small things of every day.

We are, by long habit, a wasteful people. Probably the habit is a legacy of Victorian prosperity, which gave us (or rather those of us who had the fortune to enjoy it) a higher standard of living than other nations in Europe. Every observant traveller on the Continent knows that the French, Belgian, German or Italian housewife will 'knock up' a delectable soup out of materials a British housewife normally puts in the dustbin and set before you at short notice an appetising meal, made out of 'nothing.' With our greater resources the British are notoriously the worst and most wasteful cooks, in many respects, in Europe.

Many of us have admired—with more than a touch of superiority in the back of our minds—the way "these foreigners" bend their backs to cultivate every inch of soil that will bear a crop. We have been a bit hurt, as well as at a loss to answer, when these same foreigners, admiring the greenness of our grass, ask why so many thousands of acres escape the plough or seem to feed so few cattle. In the early days of the last war we thought the German system of ration-cards funny—until we stopped our own waste by adopting it. More recently we thought the Nazi plan of employing soldiers to collect old clothes and broken bedsteads was '*infra dig*'—until the war for which they had been preparing opened our own minds to the urgency and potentialities of salvage. In consequence the comic figure of an old man with a hand-barrow crying "Rags, bones and bottles" has been replaced by a Government department using the wireless, the platform, highly ingenious newspaper advertisement,

cajolery and warning, and the powers of the magistrate to teach us to save rags, bones and bottles, potato-peelings and crusts, waste paper and old iron. "Scrap" and "swill" and "junk" are no longer words of contempt but patriotic slogans. Will this campaign, which we now recognise as vital, suffice to teach us a permanent lesson, or shall we return after the war to our incalculable wastage of 'unconsidered trifles'? Both private and communal salvage, let us hope, have come to stay.

An excellent example of how Toc H can help in communal salvage was mentioned in these pages early in the war and fresh news of it has now reached us. It comes from Wellington Branch, Somerset. Writing on March 15, a member says:—

"We have to-day sent a further £10 to the War Chest Fund. This, I think, brings our total from Wellington up to somewhere around £170. So many people are helping us in the saving of waste, and so we have to give a part of the money made to local objects, such as the Evacuees Clothing Fund, Soldiers' Comforts and the like, whilst not forgetting Toc H needs.

"By the end of the month we shall have collected and despatched in twelve months some 100 tons of waste paper, 80 tons of scrap iron, and a large quantity of rags and bones and 'any old bottles.'

"The job is a hard and dirty one, but the cause is worth it all and we are still going strong and shall do so to the end. In the collection of scrap we are greatly indebted to the Wellington Boy Scouts, who are working with us nobly. These lads make regular collections on Wednesdays and Saturdays. . . ."

### A Broadcast

In the course of a short broadcast in the Western programme on March 21, Frank Gillard added some picturesque touches to the story:—

"We've found all sorts of unexpected situations arising. One evening last summer, some of us spent a long time digging out scrap metal from a big rubbish-tip just outside the town. We concentrated on getting out several huge water tanks, because they looked like giving good value for our labours. With much sweat and toil we hauled them to the top of the tip, and there we left them, to be fetched away later. But the next day when the car and trailer went for them, they'd all disappeared. So we did a bit of detective work, and found that they had become air raid shelters in the gardens of some nearby cottages! Then there was the incident of the evening papers. These

generally come down by 'bus from Taunton, our county town. One evening the old chap who sells them was late. He wasn't on the spot when the 'bus arrived, so the conductor left the papers for him in the usual place on the pavement. But along came a couple of youngsters, very wasteful, and they immediately collared these newspapers and took them off to the wastepaper depot. It took the old chap two hours to track his papers down!

"We found we could get a much better price for our paper if we baled it. So, after much consideration we bought a baling press and installed it at our depot. This meant extra work again. The paper now not only had to be collected and sorted, but it also had to be baled. We were in a bit of a hole, until three gentlemen of leisure—a retired engineer, a retired factory worker and a retired company director—came forward and took the job clean out of our hands. They put in several hours each day, baling the paper as fast as it is brought in. It is a purely voluntary job, but they really seem to enjoy it. I think they each deserve a medal."

From another member we recently gathered other details. The salvage collected in twelve months has realised about £400; the expenses of the operation have been about £65. The

Branch aims to reach the £1,000 mark—in a town of 8,000 inhabitants. The membership of the Branch numbers 35, of whom 17 are away serving with the Forces. As Frank said in his broadcast:—

"The greatest difficulty of all was lack of manpower. As the flow of stuff increased, our membership decreased because men were continually being called up. Those of us who were left got over that by roping in all our friends to lend a hand."

A local garage proprietor has lent the Branch a car, absolutely free, for 'duration' and the members themselves have bought a big trailer to attach to it. The job needs spacious premises, and a local auctioneer has given them the use, rent free, of the old meat market, behind the Town Hall.

Who shall say that this is not essential National Service, in which Toc H can properly give a lead to a local community? Your neighbour's dustbin may be a good, because a homely, introduction to your neighbour.

## OUT EAST WITH SERVICE MEMBERS

From the Near East

HERE are some glimpses of Toc H 'out East,' seen through the eyes of Service members. First, a quotation from a letter, written in December, by Flight-Sergt. Whitfield, stationed at Aboukir:—

"I am pleased to be able to tell you that Toc H here is definitely alive, and, though we have a moving population, our numbers remain constant, and we hope that all our members and probationers who rove to other fields, and carry with them our best wishes, have pleasant memories of Toc H Aboukir. We became known to a large number of naval ratings when we did our best to entertain them all through the summer, at bathing parties at week-ends, and we are sorry that the summer is over, for it was a job that was pleasant to do. We co-operated with Dick Dines on this job, he organising the parties (at Alexandria) and we fixing them up at this end; sometimes Dick managed to come himself for a dip and a break from his duties in the Fleet Club.

"We've got a good stand-by corporate job in running a club here on the camp, a sort of canteen with a friendly atmosphere, and I'm glad to say it is going well. The war out here is providing us with a job or two, e.g. the more or less routine job of collecting books and cigarettes for the hospitals and for troops on the desert, and two of our members have even turned their hand to knitting white pullovers for wounded, and are getting on well with it. . . Our meetings are

often attended by a number of naval members, and we welcome the 'different flavour,' for, being all of one sort (airmen), we don't always get that diversity of view that is desirable in Toc H—though, from a night of discussion of our civil occupations, it was revealed that we had practically everything among us but a cat-burglar!

"We are very pleased to have our own Talbot House out here now in Alexandria, and it will receive the wholehearted support of our members, you may be sure. Alexandria has long wanted a House, for even in peace-time there was great need of a place where a steady stream of visitors to Alex., chiefly by sea but by land and air too, would be sure to find a welcome and a comfortable home. Now, in war-time, with troops constantly coming in on leave from the desert and its discomforts, I'm expecting big things from it, and I think most of our chaps will find in it more than just a place to stay."

### 'WHAT IS IMPORTANT'

And then, there is a letter, from Godfrey Kircher of Australia, whom some members in London and other places will remember, for he was attached to our staff at home for some time a few years ago. He is now serving as a chaplain with an Australian Infantry Brigade in the "A.I.F. Abroad." He wrote from hospital in Alexandria—"painful result

of a car crash." At the time he was looking forward to meeting Alan Cowling, with whom he had lived in Adelaide for a year and more, in the new Toc H Services Club:—

"There seems to be plenty of scope for Toc H in Alexandria. The only place here for the Services has been the Fleet Club—run by Dickie Dines and run very well. It is doing a great job, but it is intended for the Navy: Army and Air Force are allowed to use it, but only as a privilege. . . . Yesterday I received a notice that 'Talbot House,' Alexandria, has arrived and opened up. Grand news! Presumably Alan is on the job. . . . It looks to me as though Alex. will be for a long time the leave city for huge numbers of British troops, and so Toc H will have a fruitful field of work.

"'Tis sad to think of the Old House gone for ever. But the 'spirit of the Old House' remains and lives in countless new Houses the world over, and that is what is important."

#### 'THE GOODS'

And then, some sentences out of a letter from rather further afield, from L.A.C. F. J. Baker, serving with the R.A.F. in the Sudan and discovering Toc H there:—

"I found 'the goods': an old unused, and once dirty, but is their abode; easy chairs made from beer- and petrol boxes; remnants for curtains, tablecovers, etc.; a borrowed carpet adorns the floor to complete a very comfortable and cosy room. The china is of the usual nondescript variety, but their 'chai' (tea) is good. . . . They have been in existence over two months and are already a well-knit crowd; they have just held one Guest-night which was a roaring success. Their postal address is—The Secretary, Toc H, c/o 'The Pelican Club,' Port Sudan.

"Khartoum Group still continues to function with a steady attendance of sixteen at each meeting, . . . whilst their Tuesday Socials for civvies and Servicemen continue with increasing attendances, 140 being present at the last one in November. You can imagine how widespread this is becoming known; chaps drop in, then move on miles away, but always talking of 'Tuesday night at seven' . . . and so through the efforts of four or five chaps, a hundred-odd people forget they are comparative strangers and do their best to amuse each other one night each week. Surely this spirit cannot die a complete death as each one leaves this Tuesday-night atmosphere? Something will live from these evenings."

#### From the Far East

It is a far cry from the Sudan to Singapore. Here is part of a letter, written in December, by L.A.C. Haws Jones from Seletar:—

"The Leper Settlement, of which you have heard many yarns no doubt, holds our attention almost daily. The annual Sports were held there

in October last, when really fine support from Seletar and Singapore added to the eager spirit of competition. In spite of their malady these inmates are a jolly crowd.

"What of the 'Eleventh of the Eleventh'? A vast change from former days of Armistice celebration, I'm sure. Here, Padre Giles held a rededication service on the Sunday, when 'Light' was observed by vigilants from Singapore and Seletar in the Cathedral until dawn. . . .

"Does it not strike my reader as being irrelevant that we fit young people should be enjoying life out here while at home each one of you, now all in 'The Service,' are undergoing such trying times? We all admire you, your arrogance, determination and tolerance of the conditions and the indomitable will of the British people to win. . . . Our new C.-in-C. adds yet another to Toc H, Far East." [He refers to Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham.]

#### 'NOT A BAD CHRISTMAS'

A long letter, written on New Year's Day and received here in March, from Pilot Officer R. G. Simmons, stationed at Tengah, near Singapore, gives a picture of a host of Toc H activities round about Christmas:—

"This last month the Group has really excelled itself. We began with helping at the Services Ball. These are held regularly every two months, and we are usually asked to supply twelve helpers. This time there were even complaints that there were too many helpers, though that wasn't my fault. On the 17th we held a Guest-night in the Talbot House Club. As usual there were lots of worries and snags, not the least of which was to be told that the Club could only provide 29 cups. There were over 120 present—and we had only estimated for about 60! However, it was a great success. . . . On the 20th, six of us gave a hand at the Rotary and Salvation Army Children's Party. It is a terrible scrimmage—about 2,000 children, with their parents in many cases, each armed with a card with detachable tickets. Each of these pieces entitles the child to something or other—rides on the fair, cine show, 'pop' and a bun, a Christmas present, etc. We helpers acted as policemen, forming a cordon to control the crush at the entrance of each place, for the Chinese have no conception of a queue. To make matters worse, it rained. . . . The 23rd was the Leper Colony's Party, which was really Seletar's show, but we sent up 133 parcels and a couple of helpers. . . ."

The writer certainly did not spend an idle or self-indulgent Christmas Day. He writes: "I had 48-hours' leave for Christmas. On Christmas Eve there was a party at the Club; we had been asked to supply a couple of helpers. . . . The following morning three of us went back to the Club to clear up the mess. In the afternoon three of us went to the Salvation Army Boys' Home Sports. Seletar was there in force, and here we had been able to provide 83 parcels. At tea-time the Seletar contingent went on to the General Hospital, where they met some more of our chaps and sang carols in the European Ward. Then in



## A MINUTE'S SILENCE

A LITTLE while ago a meeting of the House of Commons Group of Toc H, well attended, spent some time in discussing a proposal which they were anxious to bring to the notice of Members of Parliament, the B.B.C. and the public. It concerned a period every day—not more than one or two minutes—for national recollection of “the eternal realities” in the midst of the momentous business of this time. There were advocates of a plan, already on foot, for a short pause at mid-day, and others who favoured a time much more easily observed by men and women who had been working all day—one minute at 9 p.m., immediately before the reading of the wireless news bulletin. The B.B.C. had pointed out technical difficulties in allowing a minute of complete silence. Soft music was one suggestion; actually the sound of Big Ben striking the hour proved to be the final solution. This was announced and recommended by the B.B.C., but probably comparatively few listeners yet realise the opportunity offered or make use of it.

At a recent Guest-night in Manchester Tubby urged Toc H to take a lead in this observance, and at a business men's lunch there next day he renewed his plea. In a message afterwards sent out to Toc H Lancashire he writes as follows:—

“A number of keen men, including many in the House of Commons, have used their influence with the B.B.C. in order to secure that every evening before the news at nine, all listeners-in should be encouraged to observe a silence from the first stroke of nine in preparation and prayer. It

plainly is unfitting and unworthy of great events, involving, as they must, much tragic loss of life by land and sea and in the air, that listeners should approach the broadcasting of news without an effort at bringing this to God in quiet ways. We must attune our spirits in a manner which can enable us to fulfil the words of the psalmist, ‘He will not be afraid of any evil tidings, for his heart standeth fast and believeth in the Lord.’

“Toc H has now been challenged to engage in a distinctive effort, involving on our part much moral courage, in order to persuade the British public that when Big Ben is heard at nine o'clock, silence may be observed on every hand. Once this point can be gained and chattering ceases, it will become during these anxious times a custom very willingly observed, a decency which no man will discard. As in old days it was a grave offence to public feeling that any should break the silence during Armistice, so to-day it would indeed prepare the nation's heart for joy or sorrow, if we could agree rigidly to observe this wholesome custom. It really is a matter of good taste and common sympathy between us all; for everyone to-day must realise that the events, shortly to be announced, involve the progress of humanity, at a heartbreaking cost to many homes. How many thousands of the humblest listeners are tense throughout this period of news, fearing that some disaster has come to those whom they loved best of all! How hideous it must be for those whose hearts are strained in very solemn expectation, to be among the folk who do not seem to take the tidings with becoming seriousness! Time and again the news is now received without the slightest time of preparation, or instinct of respect or of reverence. The general public have not yet been taught how truly they can help the situation by looking up to God on the behalf of all those men facing most instant peril on their behalf throughout the naked night.

“If, therefore, members of our family can only be prepared to lend their aid in making this point clearly understood, a serviceable custom will arise. The one-minute's silence will be observed, night after night, and this will bring in its train a quiet sense of confidence in God, which is the deepest need throughout our age.”

## THE SUBSCRIPTIONS OF SERVICE MEMBERS

A NOTE from Headquarters in the JOURNAL of December, 1940 (p. 168) dealt with the subscriptions of members serving with H.M. Forces. This was inserted in answer to many enquiries whether men on active service were to be asked to pay their yearly dues to Toc H or not. The main points of the note were (a) that the payment of a Service member's dues by his home unit is rather too ‘easy’ a way out; (b) that while the Service member's loss of normal civilian

income is recognised, over 6,000 Service men in peace-time paid on the average more than the minimum subscription to Toc H; (c) that the collection of subscriptions from its men on active service is one link between a unit and its absent members; (d) that every effort of a unit to keep in touch with its scattered members is important now and will count for much when peace comes.

Another point of view has been put forward by one Group in a letter, signed “A



Group Padre," to the Editor as follows:—

The members of my Group were much distressed to read in the December number of the JOURNAL the article headed "Membership Subscriptions," more especially as nearly half our own members are now serving in the Forces. Surely the least that Toc H could do would be to allow such subscriptions to lapse for the duration. We all realise the sacrifices that many have made, and are making, and if we insist upon the payment of subscriptions, are we not adding to their burden?

The fact that there were more than 6,000 Toc H members in the Navy, Army and R.A.F. before the war—all paying their subscriptions—hardly seems to us a parallel. We are thinking of those who left their jobs and their homes for the war only, and who we hope will one day return to their Branches. Many of them still have other obligations.

We are also unable to agree with the paragraph: "If Units fail to collect subscriptions from their members who are away, it would appear to point to failure in the maintenance of real friendship." Does that really reflect the spirit of Toc H? Do not these words appear to suggest that friendship depends upon £ s. d.? If, of course, members now serving volunteer to pay their subscriptions, that is another matter. What we feel is that they should not be asked.

We realise the financial losses incurred, but let us be generous, and the Fellowship will never suffer. Toc H grew out of the last war. Many of us served then. Surely we must do all we can for those younger brethren now following in our footsteps.

A copy of this letter was sent by its writer to the Area Padre of his Area, from whose reply we quote the main part:—

## OUR CLUBS IN THE 'BLITZ'

READERS know that the Toc H Services Club at PORTSMOUTH was completely gutted by fire in a night of 'blitz' a little while ago. After making good use of temporary quarters in a hall put at his disposal by the Church of Scotland, Padre Bobs Ford has now re-opened the Club in an old house at 12, High Street, famous as the residence of John Felton who murdered the Duke of Buckingham next door in 1628.

The new "Toc H Services Club of America," at PLYMOUTH, opened on February 1, has already had its fortunes and misfortunes. The former include a visit from H.R.H. the Duke of Kent on March 11, and a surprise visit from Their Majesties The King and Queen on March 20. 'Greeno,' the Warden, writes:—

The parallel between pre-war serving members and present ones is, I think, a little closer than you will allow, since a lot of those men, i.e. the regular men, are married and have homes to maintain in the same way as members now serving. Their gifts to Toc H are given not because they are demanded, but of their own free will, and because of their interest in the welfare of Toc H.

Regarding the paragraph which you feel suggested that "friendship depends on £ s. d.," I think the point the writer has in mind—and this is based on experience—is that, actually many serving members of Toc H are anxious to pay their subscriptions, but because the unit is not maintaining contact with them as it should, they do not know whether a subscription is required, and, if so, to whom to send it. That is why in some cases H.Q. are getting subscriptions direct. It is not being suggested that contact should be maintained with the member *for the sake of his subscription*, but in many cases the non-arrival of the subscription which a member is anxious to pay, but does not know how to pay, shows that the unit is not maintaining contact with him as it should.

There is no question of asking for subscriptions from those who reasonably are unable to pay. For such people it may be possible for the unit itself to pay the subscription, but it is undesirable to use this method when the member himself is only too keen to continue sharing his responsibility with the family.

In the last resort, of course, where neither member or unit is able to pay a serving member's subscription, it is always possible to write to the Administrator and ask for a suspension of liability. That is mentioned in the last paragraph of the article entitled "Calling all Members" in the JOURNAL for January, 1940.

"The first I knew of it was the arrival of a breathless sailor, having run all the way from the Y.M.C.A." (which their Majesties were visiting) "to tell me that 'They are coming, sir—Lady Astor has just asked them and they said Yes.' I had just time to put my tie straight and walk to the door, and up came the Royal car. It was a great joy to receive and welcome them on behalf of Toc H. Most graciously they talked to many Service folk and lady helpers. . . Both the King and the Queen said what a delightful house this is and wished it every possible success.

"Within two hours of their departure we had the worst 'blitz' yet. All night we fought fires and saved the buildings opposite, fed and watered firemen and A.R.P. workers, bandaged the wounded, and cheered the women and children. All our helpers and the Services folk worked wonderfully, and we are giving thanks for our safety."

In a subsequent night's bombing the Club suffered damage to roof and windows and during repairs has been given hospitality by the Y.M.C.A. We had no casualties.

## PORTRAIT OF TWO DOGS

FEW people give a thought to the part which animals are called upon to play in war. Yet their part is often vital and in countless cases it involves intense hardship, suffering and death. They are offered no choice: beast and bird are 'conscripted' in the irrelevant quarrels of mankind and their faithful service is scarcely ever recognised. Probably the only monument which has ever been raised in the long history of war to all the animals that took part is to be found incorporated in the great Scottish War Memorial at Edinburgh. And there none are omitted. Horse and mule, camel and elephant, the carrier pigeon, the canary used by tunnellers to test for gas, the mice sacrificed in the laboratory—each one has its sculptured medallion there.



*'Linky' and his Master.*



*'Billy'*

Animals certainly deserve a better fate than they usually get in war, and some have it. The regimental mascot and the soldiers' pet live 'on velvet.' All sorts of waifs and strays among animals, lost or sick or wounded, are rescued and made much of by the man on active service, though their future is precarious. In contrast there are some animals with an established position, recognised 'characters,' known to hundreds or thousands of serving men. Such are the two dogs whose portraits we display here.

Tubby has always been a dog-lover and his dogs have always been introduced to the family of Toc H. Foundation members will still remember his fine collie 'Kemmel,' who flourished exceedingly in the early '20s, and a much wider circle of members knew 'Smuts,' the black spaniel who upheld on

Tower Hill the reputation of his previous master, the South African general of the same name. 'Smuts' joined the team in Orkney on the outbreak of war and there fell 'on active service'—or rather because he was not quite active enough to escape the wheels of an oncoming Army lorry. His death was a personal grief to Tubby, but consolation has since come in his successor—'Billy' of Badminton, whose portrait is shown here. Billy also enters the circle of Toc H from august ownership, for he was presented to Tubby by H.M. Queen Mary soon after she heard that 'Smuts' was dead. Long may he reign!

The other dog has a different kind of story to tell, for he is a serving soldier. 'SXOI Linky' is the Alsatian mascot of the 2/10th Battalion, South Australia, A.I.F. He belongs to an Australian Toc H member, Signaller M. W. Forster, of the same Battalion, now serving in the Army of the Nile and accustomed to stay at St. Stephen's Services Club when he was on leave in London. 'Linky's' military papers are all in order and his conduct sheet is 'very good'. Brigade records show that he enlisted at Woodside, South Australia, on November 7, 1939, and was posted as 'Army Mascot'. His fellow-soldiers presented him with his first army uniform, including identity disc, which cost them over £5. He has his own kit-bag, properly inscribed, with towels, brush and comb, etc. He is carried on the ration strength and the Army provides him handsomely every day with two pints of milk, 3 lb. of steak, three eggs and fifteen biscuits. He has even made

his will, in the proscribed military form, and signed it with his right paw. He enjoys leave (with a proper pass) like any other soldier and has never been 'A.W.L.' (Absent Without Leave)—"a record for the 2/10th Battalion," says his master.

His duties are various. On battalion work he takes part in bayonet charges and route marches. But some of his duties have been more spectacular. On December 16 he made an early public appearance, leading a parade of fourteen hundred troops through the streets of Adelaide. On the same day he collected £400 for Soldiers' Comforts. He then moved to New South Wales and on February 20, 1940, led the battalion past Lord Gowrie, the Governor-General. There he contracted distemper and was sent to hospital at Rushcutters Bay. In the first three days of his illness the veterinary surgeon received over 1,000 telephone calls as to his condition. Then back to camp, discharged fit, in time to lead a ceremonial march through Sydney on March 26. A month later he was posted to Adelaide again to collect for the Soldiers' Comforts fund.

In his spare time 'Linky' has joined three South Australian clubs for the 'duration' and has broadcast three times. He hates mouth-organs and says so loudly. He has presented at least sixty photographs of himself to hospitals, Toc H units and celebrities; he has shaken hands with Don Bradman and many others. A busy dog and a good soldier, with one secret desire above all others—to see his master return across the world from the wars.

## OUR PRISONERS OF WAR

Last month we published the names and, so far as they are known, the prison numbers and camps of Toc H members who are Prisoners of war. To the 32 names in that list we can now add the following:—

L/Cpl. GEORGE JAMES BARCLAY (Inverness Group), No. 1852, Stalag IX C.

Sergt. RAYMOND J. BEAL (Ilkeston Group), No. unknown, Stalag XX A

Rev. E. V. CAVE (Bedale Branch), No. 228, Oflag VII D.

Pte. ALFRED ELLENDER (Croydon Branch), details unknown.

Cpl. E. FARRER (Huddersfield Branch), No. 1426, Stalag IX C.

GILBERT HATTON (Paignton Branch), No. 2403, Stalag XXI B.

Cpl. ERIC W. LAWSON (of former Brotton Group), No. 3587, Stalag XXI B.

Rev. H. MORTON, C.F., details unknown.

JOHN RHIND (Invergordon Group), No. 15289, Stalag XX B.

Pte. W. T. WHEATON (Brixham Group), No. 19742, Stalag XX A (3).

Dr. ANGUS WESTON (Builder, Western London Area), details unknown.

A. C. YIEND (Winchcombe Group), No. 16560, Stalag XX A.

# TOC H PUBLICATIONS

All communications regarding publications should be sent to Headquarters, Toc H, 47, Francis Street, London, S.W.1. Postage is extra on all publications unless otherwise stated.

## BOOKS

- TALES OF TALBOT HOUSE. By Tubby. 1s.  
 PLAIN TALES FROM FLANDERS. By Tubby. Longmans, 3s. 6d.  
 TOC H UNDER WEIGH. By P. W. Monie. New Ed., Limp Linen, 1s.; 10s. per dozen.  
 BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS. By P. W. Monie. Boards, 1s.  
 TOWARDS NEW LANDFALLS. By Hubert Secretan. Boards, 1s.  
 THE SMOKING FURNACE AND THE BURNING LAMP. Edited by Tubby. Longmans, Paper, 2s. 6d.; Cloth, 4s.  
 A BIRTHDAY BOOK. Twenty-one years of Toc H. Illustrated. 176 pp. Reduced to 1s.  
 A TREASURY OF PRAYERS AND PRAISES FOR USE IN TOC H (Revised). 9d. each.  
 POCKETFUL OF PRAYERS. Revised Ed. 1s.  
 LONDON BELOW BRIDGES. By Hubert Secretan. 3s. 6d.  
 TOC H INDIA AND BURMA. 6d. each.  
 ARTIFEX: THE CRAFTSMAN IN Toc H. 6d.  
 GARDENS OF FLANDERS. Talbot House and the War Cemeteries. Illustrated. 6d.  
 THE BRIDGE BUILDERS. 1s. post free.  
 LINKMEN. Parts I and II. 1s. each post free.

## PAMPHLETS

- A FEW FACTS FOR NEW FRIENDS. 2 pp. Free. Post free.  
 A TALK ON TOC H, as broadcast by Ian W. Macdonald. 4 pp. Free. Post free.  
 TOC H DEFINED. 1d. each; 9d. per dozen.  
 CONCERNING TOC H. 2d. each; 1s. 6d. per dozen.  
 1. Talbot House. 16 pp.  
 2. The Re-Birth. 12 pp.  
 3. The First Ten Years. 8 pp.  
 4. The Main Resolution. 12 pp.  
 5. The Lamp. 16 pp.  
 6. Fellowship. 12 pp.  
 7. Thinking Fairly. 12 pp.  
 "I SERVE." How a man can help boys. 2d.  
 A HYMN SHEET FOR TOC H SERVICES. 4s. 6d. per 100. Post free.  
 A SERVICE OF LIGHT AND OF REDEDICATION in TOC H. 9d. per dozen. 4s. per 100.

## HANDBOOKS

- BUILDING TOC H. 3d.  
 THE ROYAL CHARTER OF TOC H. 3d.  
 THE TOC H PADRE. By H. F. S. 6d.  
 PILOTS. By A. G. C. 3d.  
 "JOBS." By G. A. L. 3d.  
 THE TREASURER IN TOC H. 3d.  
 DISTRICT TEAMS. By G. A. L. 3d.  
 TOC H IN THE ROYAL NAVY. 3d.  
 TOC H IN THE ARMY. 2d.  
 TOC H IN THE R.A.F. 3d.  
 OVER THERE. A little guide for Pilgrims to the Old House. 6d.  
 THE ANNUAL REPORT OF TOC H. April, 1940. Free.  
 A TALK ABOUT TOC H (to Naval Members). 1d. each.

## MUSIC

- THE TOC H SONG BOOK. 135 songs, words and music. 1s.; 10s. per dozen.  
 NEWCASTLE SONG SHEET (No. 1). 1d. each; 3s. 6d. per 50.  
 GO FORTH WITH GOD, words and music. 4d. each.

## MISCELLANEOUS

- "TOC H ACROSS THE WORLD." Map showing all overseas units. 40 x 25 ins. 2s.  
 SET OF FIVE CARDS. Suitable for framing: Main Resolution. Objects of the Association. The Toc H Prayer. Initiation to Membership. Ceremony of Light. 6d. per set.  
 NOTEPAPER for Districts, Branches and Groups. 1s. 3d. per 100 sheets; 5s. 6d. per ream. Postcards 1s. per 100.  
 HEADED NOTICE FORMS. 1d. each; 6d. per dozen.  
 IDENTITY DISCS, round, white or coloured printed 'Toc H,' with space for name; safety pin attachment. 25 for 11d.; 100 for 3s. 6d.

## BADGES OF MEMBERSHIP

- BUTTONHOLE BADGES. 9d.; 8s. 6d. per dozen to Branch and Group Secretaries.  
 WRISTLET BADGES. For Service members only. Metal badge complete with strap. 2s. 6d.

## THE JOURNAL

- THE TOC H JOURNAL. Monthly, 3d.; Annual Subscription 4s. od. post free. Supplied to Secretaries for free distribution among their members serving in H.M. Forces and among Services Clubs, etc. 1s. od. per dozen.